

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Declaration of 2008 as Year of Girl Child

705. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:
SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to declare the coming year 2008 as the Year of Girl Child;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Assessment on Balika Samridhi Yojana

706. SHRI THENNALAG. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment on implementation of Balika Samridhi Yojana (BSY) project;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the total amount spent in this regard in the last financial year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Several constraints were reported by the States regarding implementation of Balika Samridhi Yojana:-

- amount received was meagre and the waiting period before maturity was too long—Rs. 6700 total amount was received after waiting for 18 years;

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- after first deposit at birth, there was a gap of 6 years where the deposit had to be kept alive without any transactions;
- issue of keeping fixed deposits for over 5 years was another technical hitch;
- families do not benefit in the present as amounts were locked;
- scholarships amounts are blocked, therefore no incentive for girl to be retained in school;
- multi agency delivery mechanism and hence administrative costs were high;
- scheme did not provide adequately for administration costs of the scheme;
- the time and effort in implementation was high—more than 11 transactions for an amount of Rs. 6700.

(c) The Scheme of Balika Samridhi Yojana is slated for transfer to the State Sector and is under the consideration of National Development Council. Hence no outlays were provided for the Scheme in the years 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Failure of ICDS

707. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), introduced 31 years ago, has failed to improve the nutritional status of children under six;

(b) whether India's malnutrition rate is nearly double that of sub-Saharan Africa and has a role to play in nearly 50 per cent of all child deaths in the country; and

(c) if so, the details of measures taken for good care of infants and toddlers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The impact of the Scheme has been significant in improving the nutritional status of beneficiaries as brought out by various studies carried out from time to